THE IMPORTANCE OF STORYTELLING TO CHINESE EFL LEARNERS

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Abstract

In China's nine-year compulsory education system, English is a compulsory subject for students and one of three main subjects. Chinese teachers, students and even parents pay significant attention and invest a lot of time and money into their children’s English language learning (Guangwei, 2019). However, although Chinese EFL teachers spend much time and effort on it, the effect is not as obvious as expected. The development of students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills is not balanced, and they lose interest in English lessons because they are stressed and bored by the traditional teaching methods. By analyzing the common errors made by Chinese students, teachers can find out the specific difficulties students are challenged with due to the influence of their native language. Teachers should focus on these difficulties during teaching and also adopt suitable teaching methods and activities to make grammar lessons more effective and fun.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Michelle Plaisance for her consistent help and support throughout my graduate studies. I also want to send a special thanks to my family for their care and support, because of them I can have a good learning environment. They also encouraged me to finish my studies when I met with difficulties.

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Chapter One: Introduction

As an elementary school teacher who has been teaching in South Carolina for three years and previously taught English in China for five years. I have found that the methods of learning English in China and the United States are completely different. In the United States, where storytelling is commonly used. Stories have always been used for teaching and learning and have played an important role in America's classrooms. Literature is typically introduced into lessons by teachers, because they serve particular pedagogical purposes or are the target of study (Paran, 2008). In the American classroom, personal stories are often used to teach diversity. Students can learn from stories, or they can imitate the stories, and often teachers and students enjoy the classes focused on storytelling very much.

On the other hand, Chinese teachers spend a lot of time and energy teaching English, and the students study very hard. However, the learning input is completely out of proportion to the output. The main method of teaching is the teacher writing formulas or rules on the board. Then students practice a lot to try to achieve high accuracy. But students cannot explain their thinking or reasoning. What's worse is that students generally can't draw inferential conclusions. As long as the question type changes slightly, students won't do it. China is a country where scores are everything. Consequently students put a lot of time and energy into studying, but cannot get good results. Students with low scores will be criticized by teachers and parents and will be denied opportunities. As a result, some students become afraid of or resistant to learning English.

I am interested in these two completely different teaching methods and the results of these methods, in China and America. It is clear that not all these methods work well in the

Chinese EFL classroom because the learning and living environment directly affect the language input and knowledge for EFL learners (Deng, 2016). China has a special environment and teaching mode.The storytelling teaching model has never been used in China and I started thinking about whether China could try this new model for English teaching in order to better help Chinese EFL students. The benefits of storytelling include development of multiliteracies, understanding of narrative genres, classroom community building, culture learning and sharing, and increasing motivation. (Barkhuizen,2018).

To help teachers improve English teaching strategies, I decided to research this area and set up a website as my final project. On the website, I have created four main sections. In the first section, I shared the research on the main mode used by Chinese teachers', students' learning mode in China and the disadvantages of the current Chinese-style English teaching. This section targeted the key and most difficult points of English knowledge for Chinese students. In the second section, I shared some innovative teaching methods and activities from both L1 and L2 English classes and adapted them to the Chinese EFL classroom. For example, it explained step-by-step how teachers can use storytelling to help Chinese students learn English. In the third section, I have created a forum where the teachers can discuss and share their problems and also include suggestions about English teaching from their own practice. In the last section, I have shared some websites and other online resources for teaching and learning English. With the development of technology, more interesting and useful resources continue to appear on the Internet. Also due to the COVID-19, there is a huge demand for remote teaching and these online resources will benefit EFL teachers and students a lot during this special time as well as in the future.

As an English learner and teacher, I have experienced the difficulties that Chinese EFL students and teachers face in English class. Through this thesis and project, I sincerely hope to have found some solutions to the problems associated with teaching English to Chinese students.

Chapter Two: Literary Review

With China's reform, it is opening up and the intensification of globalization, English has been integrated into many aspects of Chinese people's lives. While English cannot be said to be universal in China, English teaching in China generally starts in kindergarten, and many parents spend thousands of yuan to send their children to bilingual kindergartens. Chinese parents attach great importance to their children's English learning and in primary and secondary schools, English is a compulsory subject for all kinds of examinations. It is also a compulsory subject for the high school and college entrance examinations. At the university stage, the CET-4 and CET-6 English proficiency tests are used to assess whether college students have learned English. Many colleges and universities even link the results of the CET-4 and CET-6 tests with their graduation certificates. English is seen as a stepping stone for Chinese students and may be required in order to take postgraduate and doctoral exams. Essentially, English proficiency is highly valued in China. Chinese teachers, students and parents invest a lot of time and energy in English learning, but the teaching results are not satisfactory. Below I will briefly analyze this.

Current Situation of English Teaching in China

The global test scores of the IELTS English test in 2019 can illuminate the proficiency levels of Chinese learners. IELTS, is an English language proficiency test jointly opened by the Cambridge University Examinations Board, the Australian Agency for Education International Development and the British Council. This language evaluation system has a strong scientific nature and high credibility (Ielts.org, 2019), it is widely used all over the world. IELTS was the only research instrument used to examine the relationship between listening skill and other language skills – speaking, reading and writing in EFL(Bozorgian,2012).

Table 1: Global IELTS 2019 Academic mean performance by nationality.

Academic mean performance by nationality

Nationality	Reading band score	Listening band score	Writing band score	Speaking band score	Overall
Bangladesh	6.0	6.4	5.7	6.3	6.2
Brazil	7.0	6.8	5.9	6.7	6.7
Cambodia	5.6	5.9	5.5	5.8	5.8
Canada	6.9	7.2	6.1	7.2	6.9
China	6.2	5.9	5.5	5.4	5.8
Colombia	6.8	6.5	5.8	6.5	6.5
Egypt	6.4	6.8	5.8	6.5	6.4
France	7.1	7.0	5.9	6.6	6.7
Germany	7.7	7.9	6.3	7.4	7.4
Greece	7.3	7.5	6.1	6.8	7.0
Hong Kong. SAR of China	6.9	7.1	6.0	6.3	6.6
India	5.9	6.5	5.8	6.0	6.1
Indonesia	6.7	6.8	5.8	6.3	6.5
Iran	6.1	6.4	5.8	6.4	6.2
Iraq	5.4	5.5	5.2	5.8	5.6
Italy	7.3	7.0	5.9	6.6	6.8
Japan	6.1	5.9	5.5	5.5	5.8
Jordan	6.1	6.4	5.6	6.5	6.2
Kazakhstan	6.3	6.3	5.6	6.0	6.1
Korea, Republic of	6.3	6.3	5.6	5.8	6.0
Kuwait	5.2	5.6	5.1	5.9	5.5
Malaysia	7.1	7.4	6.1	6.8	6.9
Mexico	6.7	6.6	5.8	6.5	6.5
Nepal	5.8	6.3	5.6	5.8	5.9
Nigeria	6.5	7.0	6.2	7.2	6.8
Oman	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.5	5.2
Pakistan	6.1	6.6	5.8	6.4	6.3
Philippines	6.8	7.3	6.1	6.8	6.8

IELTS provides a profile of a candidate's ability to use the English language. Candidates received scores on a Band from 1 (Non User) to 9 (Expert User). Candidates received a score for each test component – Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. Candidates receive a score for each test component – Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. The individual scores are then

averaged and rounded to produce an overall Band Score (https://www.ielts.org/en-us/for-researchers/test-statistics/test-taker-performance). IELTS with a maximum score of 9 in each category and the overall score of Chinese candidates is less than 6 points. According to the Cambridge IELTS official statement, 6 points are required to pass the test. Bell pointed out that at 6 points candidates can use English effectively in general, and can use and understand more complex English in familiar contexts despite inaccuracies, inappropriateness and misunderstandings (Bell, N,1991). This set of data also reflects the three major problems with English teaching in China today.

1. Students' language output ability is weak.

Comparing the scores of candidates in Table 1, it can be seen that Chinese candidates' listening and reading are stronger than their writing and speaking skills. The high correlation of reading with listening is aligned with the cognitive load process in reading comprehension which Weir et al. (2009) found that there is a high correlation between the construct measured by IELTS and that of academic reading in the target space. Rankin conducted a study and found that listening skill was the most dominant skill for the mode of human communication. Listening skill occupies almost 50% of our daily communications (Rankin,1926). In this regard, two studies conducted by Ralph and Stevens (G. N. Ralph & L. S. Stevens,1957) and Rankin (P. T. Rankin,1930) reported that listening (46%), speaking (30%), reading (16%), and writing (9%) involve our daily communication. In the field of English teaching, we consider listening and reading to be the input of English learning, because students acquire material information through listening and watching. This is mainly related to students' comprehension ability. Writing and speaking are classified as output and students must organize language to express their opinions through writing and talking, which imposes higher requirements on students'

comprehensive ability. The unexpected results of Chinese students' weak output-oriented ability on the whiteboard also reflect the long-standing problems of Chinese English education, it has been reported that Chinese students have certain problems, difficulties, and challenges in writing in English (He & Niao, 2015; Liu & Ni, 2015; Zhan, 2015).

2. The English learning input is greater than the output.

Chinese teachers, students and parents invest a lot of time, money and energy in English learning. According to the current instructions of the Ministry of Education, Chinese students are exposed to English courses from the first grade of elementary school until they graduate from university (China National Knowledge Infrastructure,2014, P22-23). Basically every student is required to receive at least twelve years of English education. Compared with education in other disciplines, English education can be described as the busiest one in Chinese students' curriculum and this does not even include the English training classes and daily morning reading that many students attend outside of the classroom. However, despite all this effort, many parents try their best to help their kids succeed at the beginning. Many children are sent to bilingual teaching classes in kindergarten, and they will also be tutored in various English training classes after school. Many students also receive one-on-one English teaching from foreign native-born English teachers. Additionally, during winter and summer vacations, students will participate in various English training sessions or go abroad for English summer camps. All of this shows the significance of China's investment in English learning.

Despite this investment, by the Chinese government and families, according to the data in Table 1, the IELTS scores of Chinese students are unsatisfactory. Strict English education was rewarded with an average IELTS score of below 6. In contrast, European countries such as

France, Germany and Greece tend to score high, even though they place far less emphasis on English education. This kind of input and output can't help but draw our attention.

3.The exam-oriented education system limits the development of language competence.

Faced with the pressure of entrance examinations, English education in China has turned from simple language ability education to exam-oriented education. The disadvantage of the main educational mechanism is that students do not learn enough grammar knowledge and practical application. Many Chinese students find that what they have learned from multiple-choice and reading questions cannot be applied to their comprehensive abilities in writing, speaking, and listening. Even though many students have a good grasp of grammar, they do not have the awareness to actually use it (Kirkpatrick, R., Zang, Y., 2011). There are also many students who have difficulty remembering and understanding knowledge points. In fact, a lot of knowledge has been learned but cannot be used, which leads to inability to remember. Such a vicious circle causes students to be disgusted with English learning, and even students with better grades lack the ability to communicate with foreigners or to read English literature.

IELTS is a comprehensive English proficiency test for immigrants and overseas students, yet concerningly, many students who have performed well in the Chinese high school and college entrance examination also failed in the IELTS examination (Kirkpatrick, R., Zang, Y.,2011). The data presented in Table 1 is sufficient to illustrate the significant limitations that exist in our English teaching. That is that Chinese English instruction pays too much attention to test-taking skills and testing grammar. In some areas of China, the college entrance examination for English does not even have a listening test so often there are no listening exercises in high school classes and this skill goes undeveloped.

Problems reflected by the current situation of education

1. Emphasis on input ability and feeble output ability

The weak ability of Chinese students' English writing and speaking skills reflect the contempt of the current English education curriculum toward language output ability. There is unbalanced attention toward the different language skills. The current English test in our country, whether it is the middle school entrance examination or the college entrance examination, is suitable for the CET 4 and CET 6 after entering the university. But the examination of spoken language is even more minimal. In fact, this design is largely determined by the overall student base in China. In the face of such a large number of exams, in order to ensure efficiency in the reading process, students consistently struggle with subjective output evaluations such as writing and speaking, which are never as good as listening. Rost proposed that listening has an important effect on other skills (M.Rost,1994).

2. Pay attention to learning input and learning efficiency

Lin noticed that Chinese students are very invested in learning English. In middle schools, almost all students arrive at school early to read English texts or conduct English listening training during the designated early self-study time. (Lin,2009) This learning method, in fact, is meant to stimulate English in students' brains through reading and listening. However, Chinese students learn English through this method, and the resulting efficiency is not high.

3. Pay attention to the form of language and ignore the meaning of language

Due to the pressure of various exams, English teachers tend to pay more attention to exam-taking in classroom teaching. In English teaching, the reading and listening skills that Chinese students are good at are actually more about training test-taking skills. In classroom teaching, teachers explain grammar, and focus on special problem-solving skills and methods for different question types (Dörnyei, 2007). However, while many students have mastered these

skills and methods through a lot of practice, they cannot really master the application of these language knowledge stores.

The Improvement of English Education in China from the Perspective of Second Language Learning

Since the 1960s, scientists have studied the mechanisms by which humans acquire English ability, especially the mechanism of acquiring foreign language ability, and integrating various interdisciplinary disciplines such as linguistics, neurology, education and sociology (Guo, 2006). This has developed into a new discipline, called Second Language Acquisition. There are many advanced theories in this subject. Teachers have selective and targeted information and use it flexibly in our teaching practice. This in combination with the characteristics of Chinese students will help them to be more successful in their English language learning.

1. Input hypothesis--targeted input teaching improves language output ability

In the traditional Chinese school classroom, due to the pressure of exams and the huge number of students, it is impossible for teachers to provide targeted tutoring for every student, especially in output skills such as writing and speaking (Cai,2006). Writing and speaking must be done with improved reword. Teachers should encourage communication among students in the classroom. However, because students cannot guarantee the level of 1+1, in order to ensure effective communication and thus improve the language level, teacher intervention is very necessary.

2. Comparative analysis theory---seeking common ground while recognizing differences to improve learning efficiency.

In view of the situation, Chinese students' investment in learning English is not proportional to their efficiency. We should pay more attention to the characteristics of the language itself. Teaching methods should be similar to those used for native speakers of the same language system English. The results are better. Applied linguists believe that if the structure of the language learner's mother tongue and target language are more similar, that is, the universality of the language is high, it will be easier to learn. English education in China is only conducted for Chinese native speakers. This is in order to maximize the learners' language ability.

3. Return to the form of language -- pay equal attention to both form and meaning

The examination-oriented education common in China, pays attention to the language form. Yet students cannot apply what they have learned. We should pay more attention to the practical significance of the cultivation of language ability. Language teaching must combine form and meaning. In the teaching classroom, there should be no restrictions on exam-oriented education. But teachers should not only talk about test knowledge, they should also pay attention to the comprehensive understanding of the English language.

Conclusion

It is important to analyze the problems and causes of the failure of the Chinese teaching system to produce proficient English speakers. Thus, teachers should reduce the teaching of test-taking skills, pay more attention to making teaching interesting and carry out innovation in the form of language teaching. It is important that teachers implement targeted guidance on form and encourage communication between students to improve their output-oriented learning (Liu,

2012). Teachers must pay attention to the combination of language form and meaning without being limited by test-taking pressure.

Chapter Three: Project Design

In this chapter, I explain the rationale behind creating a website for Chinese EFL teachers to help them improve their English teaching methods. The website will assist teachers in targeting the difficulties that the Chinese EFL students are having and recommend effective teaching methods, such as storytelling, fun activities, and useful online resources for classes.

Huebner (1999, p. 444) suggested that "teachers might be best positioned to speak out for children and youth; however, their voices, but more importantly the voices of children and youth themselves, seem lost in the din of others who claim to speak out for children and youth." We need to hear students' voices when we are teaching English. As a new teaching mode, storytelling can allow us to hear more children's voices. Students can most effectively learn English by listening to stories, retelling stories, and other related activities. Their enthusiasm for learning can be improved, and students can enjoy the fun of learning and find success at the same time.

Grammar is an important part of the Chinese EFL experience and is related to learning English. Incorporating grammar into storytelling and promoting the internalization of the grammar system makes grammar teaching more targeted and interesting. Through storytelling activities, students can be more active in their grammar learning. Hinkel and Fotos (2002) argued that grammar teaching can enhance learners' proficiency and accuracy and facilitate the internalization of its syntactic system. When teaching a second language (L2) in an EFL context,

teachers need to adapt their teaching methods and strategies to the first language of the learners (L1), which influences all aspects of language instruction and learning (Zhan, 2015). There are some universal teaching modes in Chinese-style English teaching, and there are some common problems with these modes. By analyzing these problems and formulating targeted teaching methods, the teaching quality can be greatly improved. Corder (1967) argued that errors are significant in three aspects: they tell the teacher what needs to be taught; they tell the researcher how learning proceeds; and they are a means whereby learners test their hypotheses about the second language (L2). Output errors help teachers and students learn the areas of weakness. Thus, teachers should adopt more effective teaching methods in the classroom that provide more opportunities for student output. Storytelling is a very interesting and effective teaching method. However, in China, most language learning strategies still focus on rote memorization and practice. This kind of teaching makes students feel bored and stressed in the process of learning English and they also resist emotions. Storytelling creates a more interesting and effective learning session for students because students are more engaged, so teachers should try to use this effective teaching strategy.

Most importantly, digital teaching needs to be more widely used, especially now. Due to COVID-19, many students have to study at home. Network resources are a more convenient way for them to enjoy studying equitably. Colpaert (2014) indicated that the use of appropriate online resources allows teachers to focus on learners' needs and helps them to collaborate through meaningful learning experiences. Zaryn (2013) advised that the teachers should incorporate multimedia resources in their lessons and inspire students in collaborative activities like blogs, presentations, and videos.

In order to help EFL teachers to teach English, I have created a website that provides information and resources for using storytelling as a teaching strategy; the website will also serve as a platform to share teachers' daily teaching experiences and advice. The content of the website is divided into four sections. The first part is the common problems and reasons for the current style of learning Chinese EFL students are engaged in. The second part will focus on explaining how storytelling is taught and how it is used. The third part will provide a forum for Chinese teachers to discuss issues and make suggestions. Finally, the fourth part provides links to some online resources and techniques for EFL teaching in China. Teachers can use this website to help Chinese EFL students learn English and enjoy the fun of learning. At the same time, I will continue to pay attention to this website and regularly update the website with new resources or teaching methods. Additionally, I will also follow the forum and encourage teachers to share their teaching experience or questions, thus ideally creating a teacher resource for sharing and mutual assistance.

Chapter Four: Final Project

The present project is an educational website which is designed to improve storytelling teaching in the EFL class. The content of the website is based on the research developed by educators and scholars about common errors made by Chinese students, effective methods, and class activities and useful online resources. The name of the website is Storytelling Teaching in Chinese EFL Class (Figure 4.1), and the web address is https://yuli400.wixsite.com/storytelling

Figure 4.1: Home Page

On the homepage, teachers will find four parts to four web pages where they will get to know what challenges Chinese students are facing in learning English, how to adopt

useful teaching methods and fun class activities in class, what online resources they can benefit from, and they can also join the discussion forum to bring up their problems in storytelling teaching and get suggestions from others, and the online resources.

The first part is called “Challenges” (Figure 4.2), which states the difficulties that Chinese EFL teachers and students confront in English teaching and learning. It lists the common errors made by Chinese students and analyzes the errors by comparing Chinese and English. Teachers will find what key points of grammar knowledge they need to focus on in the future classes.

CHALLENGE 1

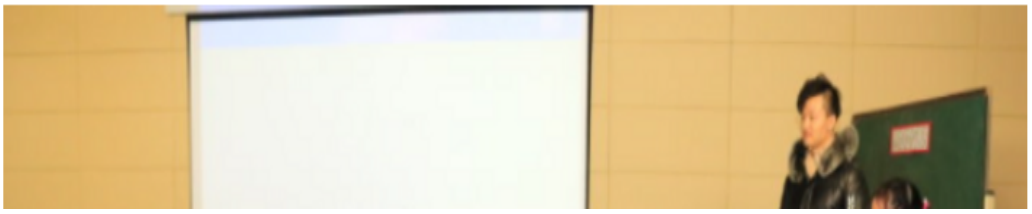
Students' language output ability is weak.

Chinese candidates' listening and reading skills are stronger than their writing and speaking skills. The high correlation of reading with listening is aligned with the cognitive load process in reading comprehension; Rankin conducted a study and found that the listening skill was the most dominant skill for the mode of human communication. Listening occupies almost 50% of our daily communications (Rankin,1926). In this regard, two studies conducted by Ralph and Stevens (G. N. Ralph & L. S. Stevens,1957) and Rankin (P. T. Rankin,1930) reported that listening (46%), speaking (30%), reading (16%), and writing (9%) are all involved our daily communication. In the field of English teaching, we consider listening and reading to be the input of English learning, because students acquire material information through listening and watching. This is mainly related to students' comprehension ability. Writing and speaking are classified as output and students must organize language to express their opinions through writing and talking, which imposes higher requirements on students' comprehensive abilities.

CHALLENGE 2

English learning input is greater than output

Chinese teachers, students and parents invest a lot of time, money and energy in English learning. According to the current instructions of the Ministry of Education, Chinese students are exposed to English courses from the first grade of elementary school until they graduate from university (China National Knowledge Infrastructure, 2014, P22-23). Essentially, every student is required to receive at least twelve years of English education. As compared with education in other disciplines, English education can be described as the most large number of inputs one in Chinese students' curriculum and this does not even include the English training classes and daily morning reading that many students attend outside of the classroom. Many parents try their best to help their kids succeed with many children being sent to bilingual teaching classes in kindergarten, and receiving tutoring in various English training classes after school. Many students also receive one-on-one English teaching from foreign nativeborn English teachers and during winter and summer vacations students will participate in various English training sessions or go abroad for English summer camps. All of this shows the significance of China's investment in English learning.



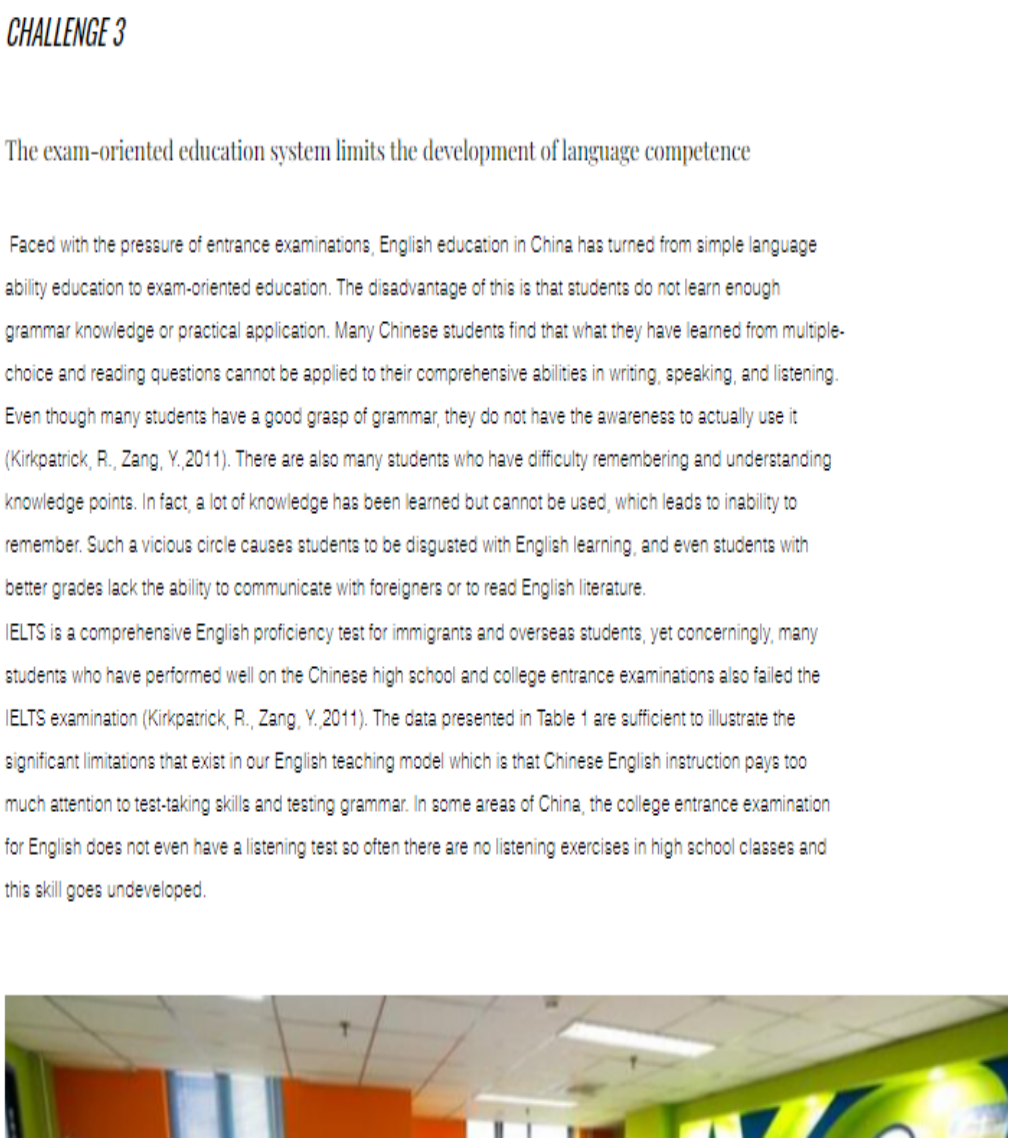


Figure 4.2: Challenges 1-3

In the second parts called “Storytelling Activities”, teachers will have a quick review of the benefits of storytelling (Figure 4.3,4.4) and activities to apply to English classes (Figure 4.5).

STORYTELLING

Storytelling is the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination

STORYTELLING IS INTERACTIVE

Storytelling involves a two-way interaction between a storyteller and one or more listeners. The responses of the listeners influence the telling of the story. In fact, storytelling emerges from the interaction and cooperative, coordinated efforts of teller and audience.

In particular, storytelling does not create an imaginary barrier between the speaker and the listeners. This is part of what distinguishes storytelling from the forms of theatre that use an imaginary "fourth wall."

Different cultures and situations create different expectations for the exact roles of storyteller and listener – who speaks how often and when, for example – and therefore create different forms of interaction.

The interactive nature of storytelling partially accounts for its immediacy and impact. At its best, storytelling can directly and tightly connect the teller and audience.

Figure 4.3

STORYTELLING USES ACTIONS SUCH AS VOCALIZATION, PHYSICAL MOVEMENT AND/OR GESTURE

These actions are the parts of spoken or manual language other than words. Their use distinguishes storytelling from writing and text-based computer interactions. Not all nonverbal language behaviors need to be present in storytelling. Some storytellers use body movement extensively, for example, whereas others use little or none.

STORYTELLING PRESENTS A STORY

Storytelling always involves the presentation of a story—a narrative. Many other art forms also present story, but storytelling presents it with the other four components. Every culture has its own definition of story. What is recognized as a story in one situation may not be accepted as one in another. Some situations call for spontaneity and playful digression, for example; others call for near-exact repetition of a revered text. Art forms such as poetry recitation and stand-up comedy sometimes present stories and sometimes don't. Since they generally involve the other four components, they can be regarded as forms of storytelling whenever they also present stories.

STORYTELLING ENCOURAGES THE ACTIVE IMAGINATION OF THE LISTENERS

The storytelling listener's role is to actively create the vivid, multi-sensory images, actions, characters, and events—the reality—of the story in his or her mind, based on the performance by the teller and on the listener's own past experiences, beliefs, and understandings. The completed story happens in the mind of the listener, a unique and personalized individual. The listener becomes, therefore, a co-creator of the story as experienced.

Storytelling can be combined with other art forms. The fruit born by the vital, contemporary storytelling movement includes the development of ways to combine storytelling with drama, music, dance, comedy, puppetry, and numerous other forms of expression. Yet, even as it blends imperceptibly into other arts, the essence of storytelling remains recognizable as the intersection of the five components included in the above definition.

Figure 4.4 Storytelling

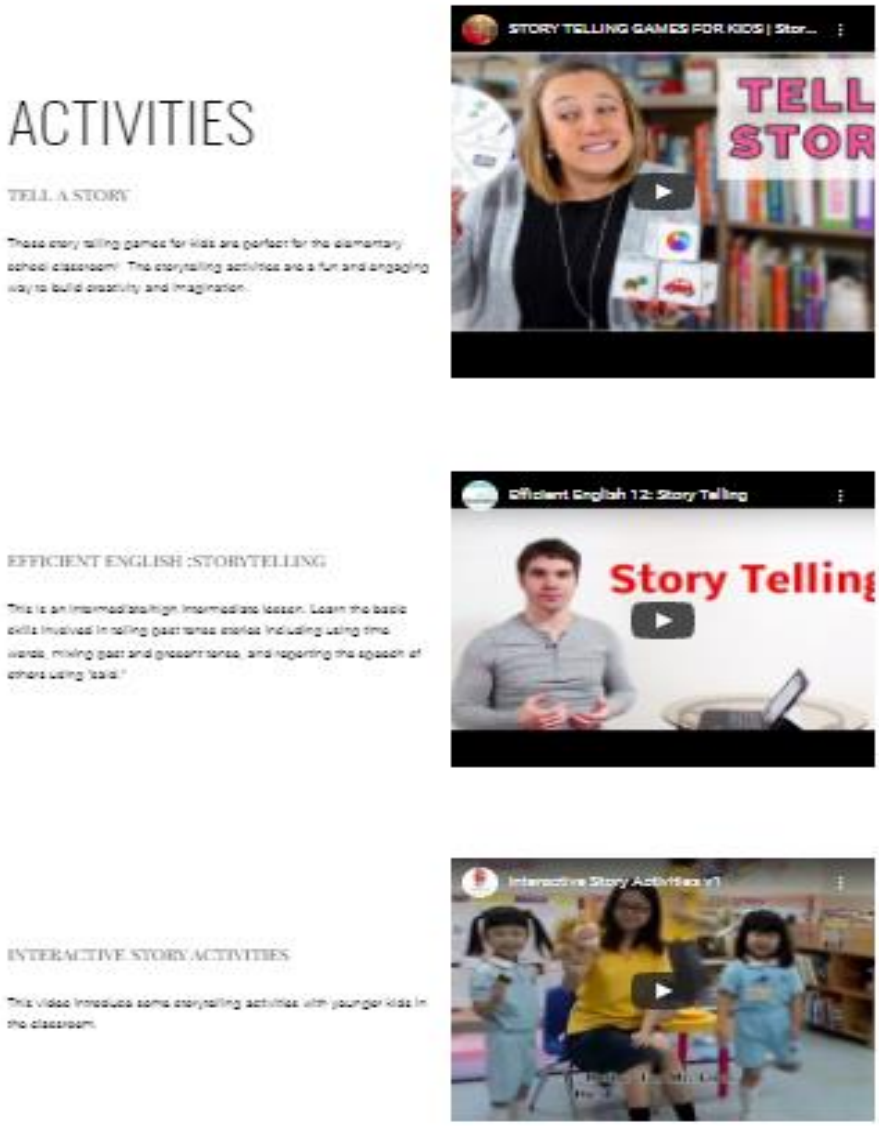


Figure 4.5 Storytelling activities

The third part is called ‘Discussion Forum’ (Figure 4.6), which contains three parts: self-introduction, questions and answers and useful resources. On the forum, teachers will get the opportunity to network with their associates, share experience from the classroom, and help each other in teaching with suggestions and resources.

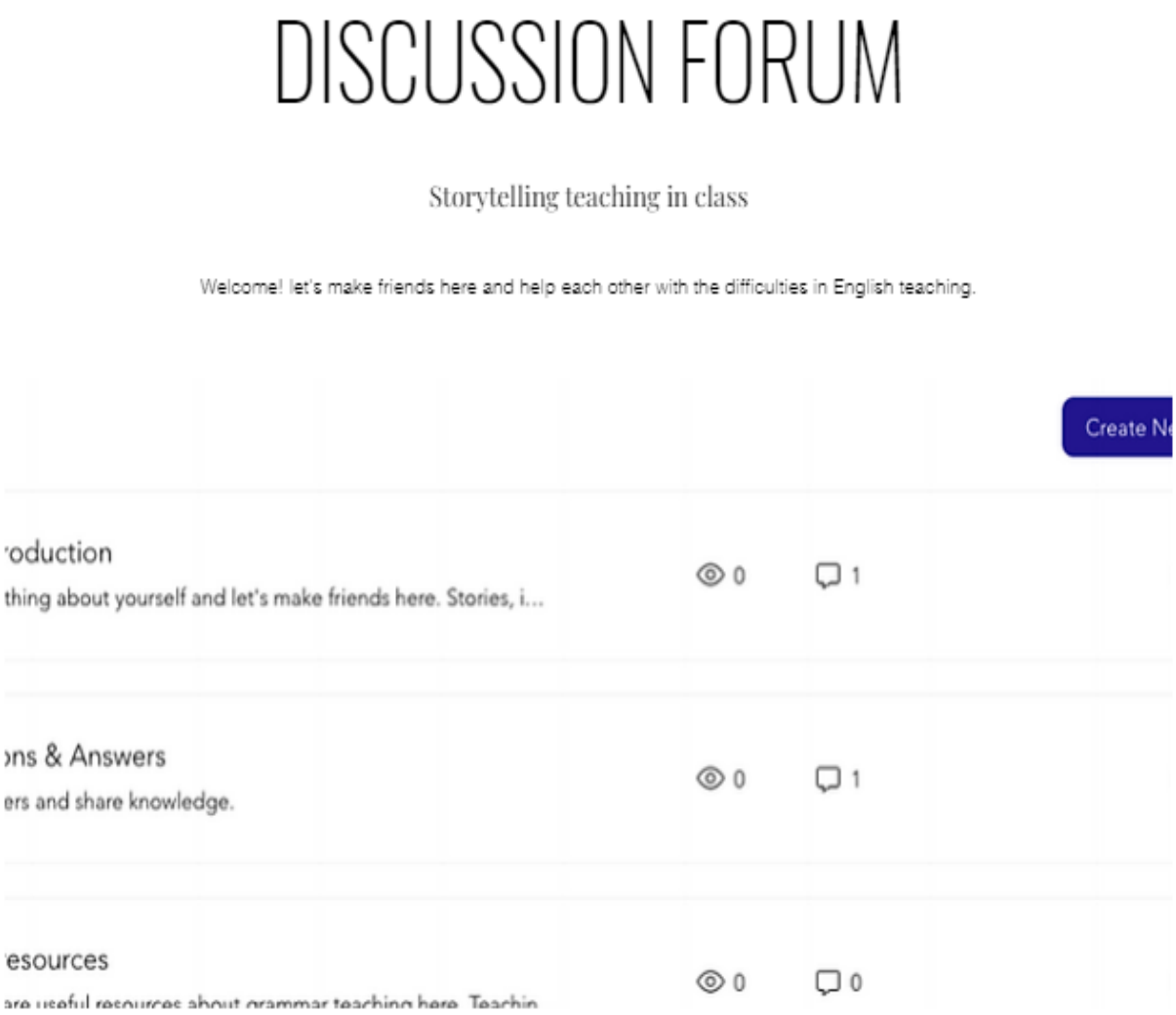


Figure 4.6

Most importantly, Teachers will find a fourth part called ‘Online Resources’ (Figure 4.7) on the website where teachers could find useful websites that provide a variety of materials for storytelling teaching and learning such as lesson plans, online games, exercises and quizzes. Teachers can adopt these resources to make the storytelling more effective and fun and satisfy diverse needs of their students.

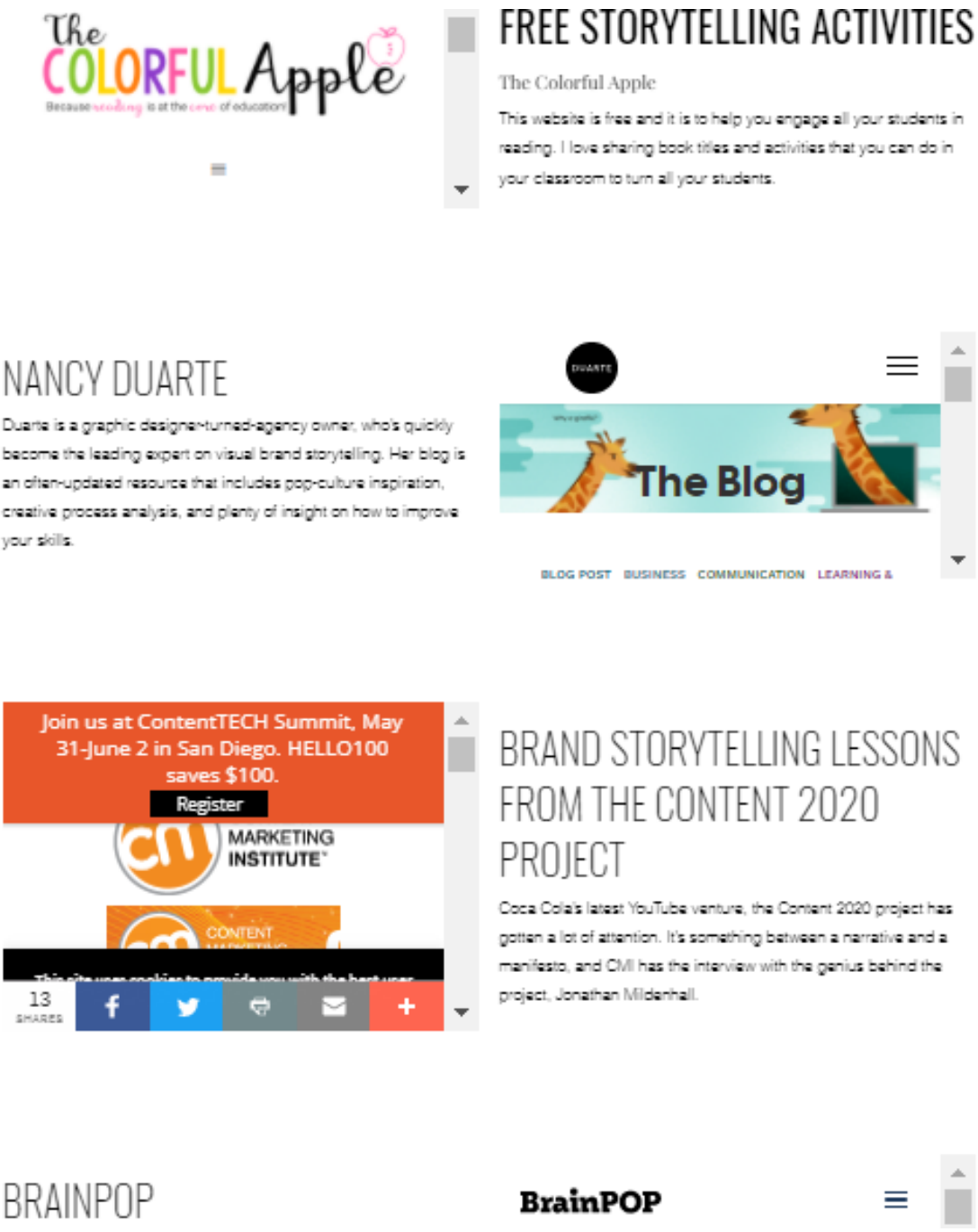


Figure 4.7

In the future, I wish to update more useful information on storytelling teaching websites. And I will create more functions for the teachers to use. I hope more and more Chinese EFL

teachers can see it and make good use of it. So that I can get good advice from them to improve the website and serve them better.

3

Chapter 5: Conclusion

English will always be an important part of China's education system even though it is a challenge for both EFL teachers and students. Chinese students have their own specific difficulties in learning English due to the influence of their native language. Therefore, teachers should raise the awareness of these differences from the EFL learners of other language backgrounds and adapt the teaching methods to the Chinese learners' needs.

As a teacher with many years of teaching experience in China, I notice that both teachers and students are under a lot of pressure and frustration from Exam-oriented education. For the teachers, although they have so much energy and attention in English lessons, many students still make the same mistakes repeatedly. Teachers know the problems their students face, but are compelled to teach the test in order to help them achieve high grades. Teach test-taking skills in class and take students through a lot of boring practice or rote memorization. As for the students, they are bored with the traditional teaching style and get distracted easily from teachers' instruction in class. Because students are used to memorizing various test-taking techniques, rather than focusing on the language itself. Not using English as a tool for understanding the world or communicating. In order to share some ideas about the improvement of English teaching in the Chinese EFL class, I created a website for the teachers where they can get to know the specific difficulties the Chinese students are faced with and some effective and fun teaching method that Storytelling and activities that can be adopted in the English lessons. They can also use this website as a platform to discuss their own problems in real classrooms and share solutions and support. While doing the research and setting up this website, I have got a

better understanding of how L1 impacts the acquisition of L2. I realize that when the students repeat the same errors and don't make much progress, teachers should collect and analyze these errors to find out the reasons behind. Also, I have got the chance to review the methods of English teaching in and abroad and discover more effective and fun ways to teach grammar. I hope that this project eases the stress that teachers and students suffer in the Chinese EFL classroom. On this website, teachers can discern what challenges their students need to deal with and what methods and activities they can use to create a relaxing and interesting learning environment. The access to some useful teaching websites is expected to offer teachers good tools for their lesson planning. Additionally, the discussion forum will provide a community for teachers to meet and communicate. Teaching is best when not done alone, and there is so much to learn and improve. Hopefully, this forum can be a platform where teachers can help and cooperate with each other. In order for this website to be a continued success, it will be updated with information of new teaching methods, activities and resources about storytelling teaching. Teachers can also provide suggestions and materials to help with the improvement of the website.

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